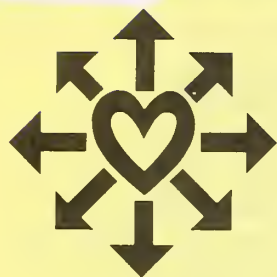


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The
Volunteer
Dimension
in
EFNEP

Developing Volunteers

LESSON 5

PURPOSES OF THE LESSON

This lesson is for the professional Extension worker responsible for training EFNEP volunteers. State staff members might use it to train county agents in charge of the EFNEP volunteer program, or county professionals may use the lesson for self study.

The purposes of this lesson are—

- To point out the need to match the volunteer to the job
- To assist the professional with training volunteers
- To suggest ideas for supervising volunteers
- To help professionals understand ways of rewarding volunteers.

MATCH VOLUNTEERS WITH JOBS

After you select and place volunteers, plan their training to supplement the special qualifications each brings to the job.

To bridge the gap between recruiting volunteers and training them for jobs, assess their interests, backgrounds, skills, and abilities. How do they think, act, feel about volunteering? Base your training on their individual characteristics.

Training is a part of matching the person to the job.

TRAINING

Training should help the volunteer progress in understanding, knowledge, skills, and experiences. As these increase, adjust training opportunities to volunteers' growth.

Training low-income helpers may take longer than training traditional volunteers. Leadership development may need to be on a one-to-one

basis, and someone should be available for the new recruit to turn to for support and advice during the development process.

Volunteers should be involved in planning and evaluating their learning experiences, and should take an active, rather than passive part in training.

See Appendix for a suggested training curriculum.

Orientation

Recruits want to know what the job is like and how they will benefit from the time and effort they spend as volunteers. Tell them what their duties are and how to carry them out.

The orientation process should introduce volunteers to—

- Staff member(s) who will supervise, guide, train, evaluate and reward them.
- Co-workers—other recruits and experienced EFNEP volunteers.
- The work place.

On-the-Job Training

Orientation is very important, but it does not train volunteers in subject matter, skills, problem solving, or human relations. The next step in the progression of the volunteer is "on-the-job" training. This may take the form of guidance and advice.

On-the-job training can take place during conferences and consultations, through field observations, or in regular work assignments.

This training should help volunteers understand their duties, and learn and practice skills needed to achieve EFNEP goals. Give them opportunities to talk to experienced volunteers who are in the same type of job and

find it gratifying.

When low-income volunteers are ready for **group training**, hold meetings in a familiar, non-threatening location. Contact them personally, through a visit or phone call, to get better attendance at group training meetings.

When volunteers first arrive at a group session, they will have questions about their jobs. This is the time for the instructor to relieve their anxieties.

METHODS FOR DEVELOPING VOLUNTEERS

1. **Begin with a job volunteer already knows how to do**, such as showing and telling how to prepare a beverage from dried milk.

2. Let volunteers **assist an experienced volunteer** with a simple part of a larger job. This helps the new volunteer learn and experience success.

3. Teach the new volunteer **one idea at a time**. The recruit in turn teaches the same idea to EFNEP clientele.

4. **Use two volunteers** as co-workers on the same job.

5. Have **three or four volunteers** act as a team on **one** EFNEP job.

6. Try **apprentice training** in which an experienced volunteer trains a new volunteer as an assistant and gradually turns over the leadership. Volunteers should have greater responsibility as they advance through sequential tasks such as—

- Attending a meeting
- Providing a place to meet
- Helping with discipline
- Assisting with meeting—(recreation, refreshments)
- Teaching a segment of the nutrition lesson
- Teaching the lesson with the help of an experienced volunteer
- Teaching the lesson alone
- Accepting complete responsibility for the group.

This learning process is accomplished by example and encouragement from the instructor.

7. Employ a **tutorial system** which involves teen volunteers as teachers of food and nutrition subjects.

An older 4-H member, high school, or college student can help youth through one-to-one teaching. A “teen leader” can teach two or

three youths together, then progress to teaching larger groups.

SUPERVISING VOLUNTEERS

Continuous supervision is essential to the growth and development of volunteers. The quality of volunteer work is directly related to the quality of supervision. Poor supervision may cause the best volunteer to resign. Good supervision can improve mediocre recruits and keep them on the job longer.

Assistance from supervisors should be geared to the changing needs of volunteers. During orientation, volunteers might be given a handbook about their EFNEP job.

Training at first should be in small increments, given at the time it is needed, to keep volunteers from feeling burdened or frustrated.

Supervisors should determine when volunteer duties and job requirements need adjustments. Good counseling and supervision helps volunteers reach their highest level of competency.

The *supervisor of volunteers* should—

- Create a friendly atmosphere for the volunteer, providing encouragement and recognition for the EFNEP activities they perform.
- Believe that low-income volunteers bring something to EFNEP—they do the best they can with what they *know, feel, and have*.
- Keep volunteers informed about important developments in EFNEP.
- Help develop the highest potential of volunteers, but be realistic about what they can do.
- Be available to answer questions and help solve problems.
- Be willing to listen for meanings and feelings.

RECOGNITION OF VOLUNTEERS

Since volunteers are not rewarded with salary, it is important that they get satisfaction from a good EFNEP experience. Their contributions should be recognized.

The taste of success, the thrill of a job completed, and a sense of achievement keep volunteers interested and on the job.

Intangible Rewards for volunteers include—

- Being asked for advice

- Developing new friendships
- Learning new skills
- Helping neighbors improve their diets
- Feeling self fulfillment and a new purpose.

Recognition of volunteers may take the form of a "promotion" to greater responsibility and status. Volunteers need to try new methods and ideas, to innovate, to broaden horizons, and to develop leadership.

Periodic Reviews should be made of volunteers' job assignments, work accomplished, and feelings about the EFNEP job. This evaluation should include feedback from the supervisor about the volunteers' work and the success of the volunteer program in reaching EFNEP goals.

Private and Public Recognition of volunteers should be given generously by the EFNEP supervisor, clientele, co-workers, and other Extension staff.

Other Suggestions for Recognition

1. Use identification, such as name badges or EFNEP cards which give the volunteer special Extension privileges.
2. Present a letter from a community VIP commenting on volunteer's activities.
3. Give volunteers mass media publicity through TV appearances, radio programs, newspaper items, and newsletters.
4. Provide awards in the form of trips, trophies, seminars, etc.
5. Hold testimonial ceremonies in connection with social events, luncheons, banquets, or an "awards day."
6. Associate recognition of volunteers with the EFNEP program and the total Extension Service.
7. Express appreciation in writing and verbally. Give deserved personal compliments on the job, immediately and sincerely. This gives timely recognition that should not wait for an awards ceremony. Write thank you notes for special efforts.

ACTIVITIES

1. Advance Assignment

Have each participant bring to class three job descriptions—one representing each level of leadership—(low—medium—high). See *Volunteers—A Challenge for Extension Workers—Developing Volunteer Leaders from Disadvan-*

taged Families. ES-USDA 1971. pp. 6-7.

2. In Class

• Using the "Curriculum Guide" at the end of this lesson, have each participant prepare an outline for training three volunteers to give maximum performance, using the three jobs described in No. 1 above. The curriculum should include—

- Orientation
- On-the-job training
- Advanced training
- Supervision
- Recognition.

• Have participants cite "recognition activities" that have been used with positive results for EFNEP volunteers.

APPENDIX

Suggested Training Curriculum

1. Guide

Before the volunteer training begins, the supervisor and the volunteers should develop a curriculum to guide and control the training.

(a) The volunteers should—

- Pool their experiences
- Express their ideas
- Discover what they know, what they do not know and what they need to know.

(b) The professional should help the volunteers to—

- Become receptive to new ideas and methods
- Recognize new and added responsibilities
- Understand new problems
- Understand and appreciate the viewpoint and experience of EFNEP program aides
- Understand the clientele they will teach
- Organize their thinking
- Become more food and nutrition conscious
- Express their viewpoints and experiences with food and nutrition.

2. Curriculum Content

(a) The curriculum for orientation of volunteers should cover the food and nutrition subject matter and management of the training sessions.

(b) The curriculum should suggest—

- EFNEP objectives

- Content—pertinent to food and nutrition
 - Learning experiences
 - Teaching aids
 - Evaluation.
- (c) The content should be organized to cover—
- Basic nutritional needs for normal diets
 - Cultural and scientific influence on food and nutrition
 - Nutrient classes—protein, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and water
 - Food selection on basis of color, texture, shape, flavor, temperature, and form
 - Time and energy saving through choice of menu and organization of work
 - Shopping for food
 - Home storage of food
 - Basic four
 - Planning and preparing simple family meals
 - Other related subject matter.

3. A Curriculum Outline

- (a) Title of curriculum: *Development of Volunteers: Basis for Individual Growth.*
- (b) Training objectives:
- Letting volunteers put training into practice
 - Acquainting volunteers with problems and needs in food and nutrition education of low-income youth and adults
 - Having volunteers take part in some of the solutions to the problems and needs of the community
 - Acquainting volunteers with the functions of community agencies
 - Providing volunteers an opportunity for personal growth through their practical teaching experience.
- (c) Behavioral outcomes
- (d) Content
- (e) Learning experiences
- (f) Resources.

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